The Chicago Hebrew Mission called Rev. J. I. Fles a unique character in his obituary published in 1921 in their quarterly journal, the Jewish Era.[1] It is safe to say that there have been no other ministers in the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) quite like my great-great-grandfather. He was born in 1842, the oldest son of a former Jewish Rabbi in Aalten, Gelderland, the Netherlands. His father Isaac (1799-1876) had converted to Christianity around 1834.[2] Isaac married a young Christian girl, Everdina Geurink in 1837.

John Isaac Fles was baptized and made confession of faith when he was fifteen years old. His father taught him the Hebrew language and both testaments of the Bible. Isaac told his family that the promises of God are unchangeable and how he greatly desired the day when Israel would be converted to Christ. At the age of nineteen John became a soldier and while serving at the garrison in Maastricht came in contact with an evangelist who aroused an interest in him for Christian service. He received private instruction from pastors in Aalten and Varsseveld, and then he began to evangelize.[3]

Chiliasm (or premillennialism) was up for a vote by the separated new denomination (the CRC in the Netherlands) in 1863. A decision of "Netherlands Christian Seceder Church" Synod said, "no one is permitted to teach it or spread it," namely, "the doctrine of the return of the Saviour to reign visibly and bodily on earth for 1000 years." Revs. Bulens and Breukelaar objected to their denomination's ruling.

When Fles was a young man in Gelderland, his pastor Rev. Breukelaar assigned him to serve at the church in nearby Winterswijk on Sundays, beginning on Ascension Day in 1865. He even preached from the pulpit although he had not been trained or ordained yet. Breukelaar had been teaching catechism there every week for seven years. Fles also received instruction from Rev. J. Bulens, and he may have participated in Bulen's 1865? preaching sessions in Varsseveld, which denounced the modern church there. A chiliastic minister, Ds. Sipkes, filled the vacancy in Winterswijk's Reformed church in 1867. The other denomination ended their affiliation with another nearby chiliastic Gelderland minister in 1869. [4]

Fles was educated in the Christian Reformed seminary at Kampen, Netherlands and graduated in 1873. That year he married Johanna Bokhorst, received a letter from people who knew him asking him to come and preach, and immigrated to America with baby Anna and Johanna's mother Anna Bokhorst. Their trip on the new SS Rotterdam took six stormy weeks.

Rev. Fles's first church in Cedar Grove, Wisconsin had originally been founded in 1847 by a leader of that Dutch community, Rev. Zonne (1802-1865). The First Presbyterian church had once struggled with dissension and a schism, but then it grew remarkably under Fles's leadership.[5] He preached and wrote in their native language. Fles published a catechism, the Doctrine of Salvation in 1878, and a pamphlet "Three Bible Lessons" in 1879.[6] Two of the texts in his lessons were from Matthew 24: 29-36, so its topic was about the Lord's second coming. Fles's premillennial catechism book referred to the resurrection of believers and asked, "Will the Lord Jesus during the blessed time of these thousand years reign physically on Earth on David's throne in Jerusalem?" And his answer (approximately - Google translated) said thoughts on that were very different but one not decided could still talk about it.[7]

Rev. Fles's next church was in another Dutch community; Pella, Iowa. The town's founder and leader, Rev. Hendrik Scholte (1805-1868) once began this church. The original church in Pella had divided several times, some members organized a Reformed church, and some joined a Baptist church. Then the congregation was independent when Fles arrived. It became the Holland Presbyterian Church of Pella in 1880. They had eighty members and the Sunday school had about one hundred and twenty five pupils.[8] Fles left them in 1882 after receiving an earnest call to serve in Zeeland, Michigan.

North Street C.R.C.'s records say it began when forty-four members left their community founder, the Rev. Vander Meulen's (1800-1876) First Reformed Church and began meeting in 1881, and then they organized and applied to join the growing CRC denomination in 1882. Rev. Dosker's dramatic account[9] describes how they left over a disagreement about Freemasonry. The CRC didn't allow its members to join fraternal organizations that required oaths of secrecy. John and Johanna's family had added a boy and two more girls by the time they moved to Michigan. Then another doctrinal controversy followed.

A CRC history by Rev. Henry Beets said, "In 1883, when the Rev. J. I. Fles was admitted to the denomination, he had to retract certain views connected with Chiliasm, expressed in his aforementioned catechism. Drs. A. Kuyper and H. Bavinck had condemned Chiliasm repeatedly as Judaistic. "[10] Chiliasm was an early form of dispensational premillennialism, a doctrine which examines what Biblical prophecy predicts will happen when Christ returns. Dispensationalism also divides history into different spiritual periods.

The CRC's original Acts of Synod from each year were all translated to English and are available online. Those records from 1883 said, "A letter from the Church at Pella, containing a protest against the pastorate of the Rev. J. I. Fles, as the minister of the Zeeland Congregation, because of his expressed opinions not in accord with Holy Writ, in connection with some points of Eschatology, in his Question Book."[11] Classis Holland, of which the Zeeland congregation was a member, however, accepted Fles's explanation of his view on the millennium and he was admitted to the CRC ordained ministry.

Then there was another objection at the following year's Synod. Rev. Fles affirmed "that he is in hearty accord" with all the denomination's Confessions and Articles, "and rejected that which was in conflict with this." The Synod said his explanation was acceptable, so "it lets the matter rest, as in accord with Classis Holland. The South Holland Consistory, however, continues its protest."[12] And that Consistory did appeal the decision again in 1886, this time saying, "one of his three lectures uses an expression which might lead to the conclusion on non-recognition of the divinity of Christ … all such expressions [are] out of order, and dangerous besides, and though they were not meant to be taken amiss, they were nevertheless stated so they might be." Synod replied, "Since the Rev. Fles has even stated very clearly at this session, that he believed in the divinity of Christ with all his heart, and as his preaching has always shown; the Consistory of South Holland should now rest in this explanation."[13] The minister who objected, Rev. Meinders, and his church (in Illinois) eventually left the CRC denomination.

A biography of Fles by Henry Beets[14] said (in Dutch) those seven years at North Street "flew by" and were "most blessed and enjoyable." Their youngest child Benjamin was born in 1884. The congregation installed a church bell in 1885. It still rings every Sunday. Fles wrote a sermon for Zeeland's 40th anniversary memorial celebration in 1887. And Anna Bokhorst died in 1887. Rev. Fles didn't want to leave; "Not without a struggle [it probably means in his heart], he took this call" to serve as a pastor in Muskegon next. All three of Rev. Fles's postings later asked if he might return, which Beets considered "quite remarkable."

One Muskegon CRC history[15] said (Google translated from Dutch) that Dominie Fles preached the Gospel of the Cross at First C.R.C. from 1890 to 1908, and very many came during these years to the confession of faith. The most memorable event that occurred was the great fire in 1891. The church, the rectory and the school were reduced to ashes by fire … and by God's good hand were soon rebuilt. Their new church building was beautiful and large. Although three other CRC churches were added nearby afterwards, the congregation still had about 1,500 people in it.

Rev. Fles considered Jewish salvation to be so significant, and so necessary to God's plan that he helped persuade the Christian Reformed Church to begin a mission to the Jews. His CRC obituary said, "Himself belonging to the chosen people of God, he believed firmly in their future, and aroused much interest in the cause in the hearts of many of our people."[16] Henry Beets said Fles "pleaded touchingly for the cause."[17]

Fles was the treasurer of the CRC Jewish Mission Committee from 1892 – 1920, and its financial support for the Chicago Hebrew Mission began around that same time. William Blackstone had founded the ecumenical Chicago Hebrew Mission in 1887, and he helped D. L. Moody begin his nearby Bible Institute that same year. From 1891 through 1916 Blackstone petitioned U. S. Presidents and other world figures to open a way for Jewish restoration to Palestine.[18] He has been called The Father of Zionism.

North Street Church's next minister after Fles, Rev. Riemersma had moved on to First Chicago C.R.C. when he and Rev. Fles witnessed about Jesus at the Chicago Hebrew Mission on Sept. 12, 1893.[19] Fles may also have joined Blackstone and Rabbi Kohler in attending a Jewish Congress held then at the Parliament of Religions as part of the World's Fair in Chicago.

The CRC had already been scattering their financial support among several Jewish missions when in 1896 the Superintendent of the Chicago Hebrew Mission was given the floor by Synod. Rev. Marcusson quoted John 4:22, "Salvation is from the Jews" and added, "They have rejected the Lord, but at some time they shall again worship Him. Therefore help us to bring Christ to the Jews."[20]

Synod's reply assured him of their support and prayers and said, "This is according to the prophecy … that God will fulfill." But then the Synod said, "Our Church would be more in sympathy with his work if it were conducted along more ecclesiastical lines."

Rev. Fles replied for the Committee, "Permit us to recommend the Mission among the Jewish people very strongly." And, "Your Committee hopes and prays that the good will in this among our people shall in no way diminish, and the advice to the Synod is that it continue the course it has been following." Then he said, "Although … [the Jews] now are broken off because of unbelief, nevertheless God's promises and his calling remains unchanged, and they will again be grafted into one olive branch." And, "The time will come when the Lord will direct his aid to his Zion, and at that time the cities of Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, and He will then return His people to His land and they will settle there, and then He will be a God to them, and they, His people. … But therefore must the Gospel be preached, so they may learn to know him, who was the hope of the fathers, the wish of the Heathen, who is the Saviour of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ."

Fles wrote an article in the Jewish Era that year saying, "Jesus … wishes that the church, the believers of the Gentiles, shall know and never forget that the Lord shall yet do great things for his chosen people." And, "We preach and pray and labor to save some of them, but they are only the first-fruits of the great coming harvest. To convert the people, the nation, is the work of Christ, the Anointed One of the Father. He shall convert Israel to Himself." It ends by saying that The Lord will ever bless these missions "until all His promises are fulfilled. The powers of darkness will be destroyed, the church glorified, Israel brought to Christ, and the whole earth be filled with His glory, and the conclusion of David's Psalms will reach its fulfillment: 'Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.' Hallelujah!"

At the next Synod meeting in 1898 the denomination's leaders expressed similar concerns about the Chicago Hebrew Mission, Fles gave another passionate speech supporting them, and the CRC decided to focus all of their support there. For the next twenty years every Synod session featured a report by Fles and the Jewish Mission Committee that gave financial numbers, quoted Biblical prophecies about the Jews, and asked the CRC to continue their support for the Chicago Hebrew Mission.

A history of CRC missions credited Fles's "significant early voice" and also said, "Some voices recommended … [the Church] withdraw its cooperative efforts from Christians with such dubious theological credentials."[21] The Chicago Hebrew Mission leaders were ardent dispensational premillennialists, believing the Jewish people's "role in history" and "the emerging Zionist movement … in Palestine" were "indicating that the present era was ending and the Messianic age was at hand."[22] Henry Beets summarized the CRC's majority view that pre-millennialism will "almost inevitably lead to developments out of line with sound Calvinistic principles."[23]

Two student preachers who had roomed at the Christian Reformed Calvin Seminary together both married into the Fles family in Muskegon in 1905. Cornelius De Leeuw married Hermina (Minnie). John Hiemenga married Everdena (Dena). Oldest son Isaac married Lutena Boonstra in 1906, and my Grandpa John Fles was born in 1908.

"Ds. Fles was climbing in years [He was 66], so after consulting with church council and receiving their approval he went to take a well-deserved rest, saying farewell to the congregation in Nov. 1908,"[24] said the Muskegon CRC history (in Dutch).

Rev. Fles remained retired from pastoring for almost three years when he accepted the call to return to Pella Iowa and his former church in 1911. There had been an acrimonious split there over premillennialism in 1897.[25] The history of the Second Christian Reformed Church said, "His ministry was richly blessed of the Lord. He labored with devotion and in an able manner. The membership once more increased. It was also during his ministry that interest was awakened in the cause of Christian education."[26] And Fles was one of the editors of the CRC missionary magazine from 1912-1915.

In the 1912 session held in south side Roseland Chicago, the CRC Synod considered beginning its own Mission to the Jews because "a mission that proceeds from a society never gains the full support of our people. And, if this work is done by our own Church, then it proceeds along purer lines, and then there will be more sympathy gained among our people for this cause." Therefore they advised, "In Chicago attempt to take over the Northwest Side Branch of the Chicago Hebrew Mission."[27]

A separate "Committee With Reference To Jewish Missions" gave a long statement which described the CRC's motivations. Reason number three said "the big question" concerned how "it will be impossible to control the mission personnel" who were not Reformed. But Fles, who was the sole signer of his committee's objection, noted the mission's success and asked, "Why should anyone want to disturb this work? What gain would there be to move this work elsewhere?" He concluded by asking that the denomination support remain as it was.

Jewish convert Rev. Louis Meyer, of the Chicago Hebrew Mission, was a widely-travelled field evangelist. He also edited most of the essays in The Fundamentals, which became an important symbolic beginning of the Fundamentalism movement. Meyer went to the 1912 Synod session, speaking on behalf of the

Chicago Hebrew Mission's interests and heartily thanking the denomination for supporting it. He died in 1913. Revs. Beets and Fles eulogized him in the Jewish Era.

In 1914 the Synod said, "It is not possible to obtain part of the Hebrew Mission in Chicago, since the Board rejected the request."[28] Rev. Hiemenga was on the CRC's Jewish Mission Committee that year. Rev. De Leeuw and Isaac Fles were also there. That year Fles's report to the Synod said, "For twenty years … the love of Christ pressed me not only to pray for this people … but also that I might do something towards their salvation. It was a work of love. … Herewith your Treasurer in a happy frame of mind, places his work in the hands of Synod, trusting that the Gospel proclamation to that ancient people prayerfully shall be prosecuted with joy and zeal."

Premillennialism and Zionism gained support in February 1914 at an important "Prophetic Conference" held at the Moody Bible Institute. William B. Riley, later called "the chief executive of the fundamentalist movement," said the Zionism movement revealed the beginnings of fulfillment for millennial prophecies.[29] And the next year the Chicago Hebrew Mission sponsored another conference at the new Moody tabernacle. Thousands attended each day. Fles didn't go, but Henry Beets gave a speech there.

While in Pella Fles met Rev. Harry Bultema, the CRC minister in nearby Peoria, Iowa, who would leave the CRC in 1920 due to his premillennial teachings. Bultema's autobiography notes that his adoption of premillennial ideas began with his introduction to Fles at a meeting in the home of Fles's son-in-law, Cornelius De Leeuw, who was the pastor on Pella's First C.R.C. Fles quietly read the brief chapter of Hosea 3 and said, "Now listen then, brethren, to the Word of God … the children of Israel shall return, and seek Jehovah … When? In the latter days, the day of Christ's coming and Kingdom."[30] Fles said he believed God will have mercy on Israel at that time in the future. Most of the other ministers disagreed. Bultema spoke up and argued the point of Fles's eloquent exegesis was based upon "what God has said in this Word," not on what some Reformed theologians may have once said.

Fles retired from his ministry in Pella in 1915 due to Johanna's failing health. Daughter Dena Hiemenga died from a sudden illness in New Jersey in 1915. They had a little girl. Rev. Hiemenga remarried the following year, and he became Calvin College's first President in 1919. John and Johanna returned to Muskegon where their two boys' families still lived. Johanna's death in 1916 was a keen blow to them.

Rev. Fles was a pastor emeritus at his old church, First C.R.C., and when they needed a new minister, "He made a speech on behalf of young Bultema of Peoria. He evidently had not forgotten the interesting debate at the home of his son-in-law."[31]

World War I brought an apocalyptic interpretation of how current events had fulfilled the prophecies in Matthew 24. The Balfour Declaration was published in 1917, expressing British support for a Jewish home in Palestine. And premillennialism spread like a prairie fire.

Rev. Bultema's book Maranatha was published in 1917. It said that Christ's return was imminent. Many in the CRC agreed, in 1918 the President of that Synod, Rev. Idzerd Van Dellen said, "Brothers, the Lord is coming! Everything points to this event. The signs of the times tell us … [and] the bloody field of war speaks of it." But the CRC's official position on eschatology declared Bultema's views to be contrary to those of the church.[32] As a result the 1918 Synod demanded the First Muskegon church's consistory discipline their pastor. When the church refused to act, the denomination's regional body, Classis

Muskegon, appointed a committee to persuade the consistory to do so. Rev. Fles's son was included on a different list of seventeen "Classical brethren."[33] The consistory refused to suspend their minister and Bultema refused to retract his statements, contending his reasoning was Biblically based and that he wholeheartedly accepted all Creeds.

One Sunday in 1919 the CRC sent Rev. Volbeda to preach in Bultema's place. Newspaper boys patrolled the streets screaming, "Will Bultema preach?" He took the pulpit early and preached quoting John 9. Bultema and most of the consistory were deposed. Most of the congregation followed them to organize the Berean Reformed Church.[34]

Afterward a Dutch seminary student wrote, "I preached in Muskegon, where Rev. H. Bultema was deposed by the classis. Two hundred families left with him, and only one hundred remained in our denomination. I preached to these one hundred. It was the largest church I have ever preached in, but the pews were not filled. On that occasion a Jewish minister, the elderly Rev. John Fles, was also in attendance."[35]

Also in 1918 the CRC Synod decided to end their support for the "interdenominational" Chicago Hebrew Mission and to begin a different "ecclesiastical and confessional" Chicago Jewish Mission "of our own Church."[36] Fles and the committee once again made several arguments to defend the Mission.

And then the Jewish Mission Committee said, "As in the past 24 years, the lion's share of the work fell on our President-Treasurer, Rev. J. I. Fles, who, despite his age and physical weakness has always continued to perform his work cheerfully." They closed with Psalm 53:6, "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, then shall Jacob rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."

In 1920 Rev. Fles "requested Synod not to re-appoint him" to the Jewish Mission Committee. They granted his request "with gratitude for the many, long, and faithful years he has served."[37] And the CRC made plans to give $20,000 for a new building to their new mission, the Chicago Jewish Mission.

Rev. Fles visited his daughter Minnie and Rev. De Leeuw's family in Iowa that Christmas. He died suddenly in 1921 at age 78 while spending Easter at his daughter Anna and Peter Zuidema's house in Kalamazoo Michigan. They are all buried in Zeeland Cemetery; its monument has the Old Testament verse, Isaiah 26:19 which says in Dutch, "Thy dead shall live, they will rise."[38]

Premillennial beliefs remained a key part of the thinking in some Christian Reformed Fundamentalist circles for years, according to James Bratt and Rev. Gordon Spykman.[39] The CRC was always ambivalent about Fundamentalism, but in the 1920s and 1930s liberal modernism was considered to be more of a threat to their faith. Similar ideological debates continue today, and they still reflect differing thoughts about premillennialism, prophecies, and political policies concerning Israel.

The CRC's Jewish Mission was renamed the Nathanael Institute and it eventually closed in 1965. The Chicago Hebrew Mission has never stopped evangelizing. Now called Life in Messiah International or AMF, it is oldest independent outreach to the Jewish people in the United States.

[1] The Jewish Era. 1921. p. 129. http://books.google.com/books?id=jn0zAQAAMAAJ&pg=RA2-PA129&lpg=RA2-PA129&dq=rev.+ji+fles+the+jewish+mission&source=bl&ots=lPyK6coGoc&sig=x7F3OuTTVdvC80zudJ8fuLGByhs&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Q8B3U532IsWUyASI4YHICg&ved=0CCYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=rev.%20ji%20fles%20the%20jewish%20mission&f=false.

[2] The Jewish Era. Rev. John Riemersma. July, 1894. p. 70. Father taught Hebrew and desired conversion of Israel, p. 72. Father taught both Bible testaments and that the promises of God are unchangeable, p. 73. https://archive.org/stream/amfmonthly1518amer#page/n357/mode/2up/search/%22John+Izak+Fles%22.

[3] [Henry} B[eets], "*The Late Rev John Isaac Fles*," Yearbook of the Christian Reformed Church (Kalamazoo; Dalm Printing Co., 1922) 165-166. The CRC obituary for Fles. http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015071425303;view=1up;seq=162.

[4] 1868 book by Dutch CRC seminary Prof. -while Fles there- H. De Cock. 1663 and 1666 Synod decisions included. https://books.google.com/books?id=qrZcAAAAcAAJ&newbks=0&printsec=frontcover&pg=PA62&dq=In+de+Synode+van+1866+kwam+het+volgende+in+behandeling:+De+Synode+kome+terug+op+Art.+16+der+Synode+van+1863&hl=en#v=onepage&q=In%20de%20Synode%20van%201866%20kwam%20het%20volgende%20in%20behandeling%3A%20De%20Synode%20kome%20terug%20op%20Art.%2016%20der%20Synode%20van%201863&f=false

A link to a translated excerpt.

Delpher Dutch archive. Titel: *Het independentisme in de Graafschap van Gelderland gedurende de eerste jaren der Afscheiding*

Auteur: Sluis, J. van der Jaar van uitgave: 1905.

https://www.delpher.nl/nl/boeken/view?objectsearch=Bulens&coll=boeken&identifier=MMSFUBU02:000049220:00004.

Delpher also has a story about the protest of the CRC in the Netherlands vote;

Titel

Rapport over de leer van Ds. A.M. Berkhoff betreffende het duizendjarig rijk en de tweeërlei opstanding

https://www.delpher.nl/nl/boeken/view?coll=boeken&identifier=MMTUK01:000000687:00014

Coauteur: Schuit, J.J. van der

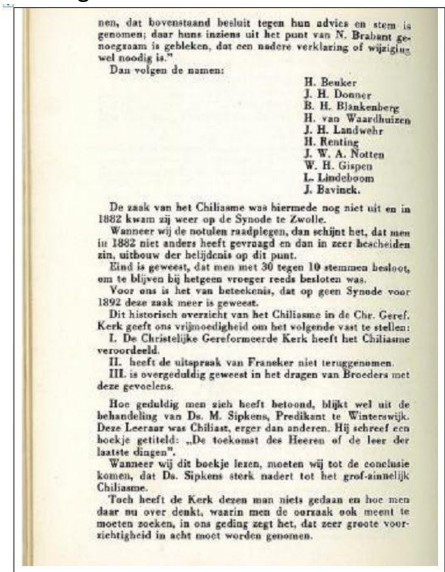
Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland. Generale Synode

Jaar van uitgave: 1933

Another article from both Digibron and Delpher has the ended their affiliation/protest story here;

https://www.delpher.nl/nl/boeken/results?cql%5B%5D=%28title+exact+%22Rapport+over+de+leer+van+Ds.+A.M.+Berkhoff+betreffende+het+duizendjarig+rijk+en+de+tweee%CC%88rlei+opstanding%22%29&coll=boeken

An image of source:



nen, dat bovenstaand besluit tegen hun advies en stem is genomen; daar hunne inziens uit het punt van N. Brabant genoegzaam is gebleken, dat een nadere verklaring of wijziging wel noodig is."

Dan volgen de namen:

H. Beuker
J. H. Donner
B. H. Blankenberg
H. van Waardhuizen
J. H. Landwehr
H. Renting
J. W. A. Notten
W. H. Gispen
L. Lindeboom
J. Bavinck.

De zaak van het Chiliasme was hiermede nog niet uit en in 1882 kwam zij weer op de Synode te Zwolle.

Wanneer wij de notulen raadplegen, dan schijnt het, dat men in 1882 niet anders heeft gevraagd en dan in zeer bescheiden zin, uitbouw der belijdenis op dit punt.

Eind is geweest, dat men met 30 tegen 10 stemmen besloot, om te blijven bij hetgeen vroeger reeds besloten was.

Voor ons is het van beteekenis, dat op geen Synode voor 1892 deze zaak meer is geweest.

Dit historisch overzicht van het Chiliasme in de Chr. Geref. Kerk geeft ons vrijmoedigheid om het volgende vast te stellen:

I. De Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk heeft het Chiliasme veroordeeld.

II. heeft de uitspraak van Franeker niet teruggenomen.

III. is overgeduldig geweest in het dragen van Broeders met deze gevoelens.

Hoe geduldig men zich heeft betoond, blijkt wel uit de behandeling van Ds. M. Sipkens, Predikant te Winterswijk. Deze Leeraar was Chiliast, erger dan anderen. Hij schreef een boekje getiteld: „De toekomst des Heeren of de leer der laatste dingen".

Wanneer wij dit boekje lezen, moeten wij tot de conclusie komen, dat Ds. Sipkens sterk nadert tot het grof-zinnelijk Chiliasme.

Toch heeft de Kerk dezen man niets gedaan en hoe men daar nu over denkt, waarin men de oorzaak ook meent te moeten zoeken, in ons geding zegt het, dat zeer groote voorzichtigheid in acht moet worden genomen.

(prior page) The undersigned feel the need to indicate ... that the above decision was taken against their advice and vote; since, in their opinion, it has sufficiently appeared from the point of N. Brabant [classis?] that a further explanation or **amendment [to the 1863 decision]** is necessary."

Then the names follow:

H. Beuker J. H. Donner
B. H. Blankenberg H. van Waardhuizen J. H. Landwehr
H. Renting J. W. A. Notten
W. H. Gispen L. Lindeboom J. Bavink.

The matter of Chiliasm was not yet over and in 1882 she was again at the Synod in Zwolle. When we consult the minutes, it seems that in 1882 no other request was made, and then in a very different sense, an extension of the confession on this point.

At the end of the day, it decided with 30 against **10 votes to stick to what had** already been decided earlier. It is of significance to us that this matter was no longer discussed at any Synod before 1892. This historical overview of Chiliasm in the Chr. Ref. Church gives us boldness to establish the following:

1. **The Christian Reformed Church has condemned Chiliasm.**
2. [It] did not retract statement of the Franeker [1863 Synod].
3. [It] has been over-patient in carrying Brothers with these feelings.

How patiently they have been rewarded is apparent from the treatment of Rev. M. Sipkens, Pastor in Winterswijk. This Teacher was Chiliast, worse than below. He wrote a little book entitled: "The Future of the Lord or the Doctrine of the Last Things". When we read this little book, we must come to the conclusion that Rev. Sipkens is approaching grossly sensual [carnal] Chiliasm. Yet the Church has done nothing to this man, and whatever one thinks about it now, [or whether] ~~whatever~~ one thinks one should look for the cause, in our case it says that very great caution must be observed.

[So were they the ones who "wanted to tolerate Chiliasm in the Church"??]

The convinced chiliast story is by GJ Kok in 2021. https://gereformeerdekerken-info.translate.goog/2021/07/01/de-gereformeerde-kerk-te-winterswijk-1/?_x_tr_sl=nl&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=wapp. I have an image of this source available too. Rev. Harry Bultema's *Maranatha: A Study of Unfulfilled Prophecy*, 1917 and 1986 also had those same descriptions of the Revs. Bulens and Breukelaar.

[5] Rev. Hoffman The Wisconsin magazine of history. Published in 1919. Their p. 465. http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/ref/collection/wmh/id/1304.

[6] Calvin College's Hekman Library, in Heritage Hall. This query lists his books. http://ulysses.calvin.edu/eg/opac/results?qtype=keyword;query=John%20Isaac%20Fles.

[7] De Chr. Geref. Kerk in N. A.; Zestig Jaren Van Strijd En Zegen. Beets, Henry, Published 1918. (It isn't included in his English book.) http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015022381456;view=1up;seq=235. Their p. 231.

[8] Union Historical Company, *The History of Marion County, Iowa*, Reprint of the 1881 edition. http://books.google.com/books?id=LnB2S8O_3oMC&pg=PA637&dq=%E2%80%9CRev.+John+Isaac+Fles+is+the+present+pastor;+the+membership+numbers+eighty.+%22&hl=en&sa=X&ei=CfJaUravM6KTyQG9kIG4Aw&ved=0CDgQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%E2%80%9CRev.%20John%20Isaac%20Fles%20is%20the%20present%20pastor%3B%20the%20membership%20numbers%20eighty.%20%22&f=false.

[9] Historical and Business Compendium of Ottawa County, Michigan. Dosker, et al. p. 106. Copywrite 1892, Published 1893? http://books.google.com/books?id=wTwVAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA106.

[10] Henry Beets. The Christian Reformed Church in North America … (history in English). p. 116. Published by Eastern avenue book store, 1923.

[11] All Acts of Synod of the Christian Reformed Church are available at http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod. http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod/1883acts_et.pdf. p. 10 of the document.

[12] http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod/1884acts_et.pdf. p. 8 of the document.

[13] http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod/1886acts_et.pdf. p. 8 of the document.

[14] Henry Beets. De Gereformeerde Amerikaan: 1904; 1897-1904. May, 1904. Their page 227. http://books.google.com/books?id=N9InAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA229&lpg=PA229.

[15] De Eerste Christelijke Gereformeerde Gemeente, 1867-1917, Muskegon, Michigan. Grand Rapids, Mich., The Cargill co., 1917. http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015071424587;view=1up;seq=19 quoted. http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015071424587;view=1up;seq=12 His picture. Buildings on p. 4 and 6.

[16] [Henry} B[eets], "*The Late Rev John Isaac Fles*," Yearbook of the Christian Reformed Church (Kalamazoo; Dalm Printing Co., 1922) 165-166.

[17] op. cit. Henry Beets. The Christian Reformed Church in North America … (history in English). p. 158.

[18] Jonathan Moorhead. The Father Of Zionism: William E. Blackstone? 2010. Their p. 788-789. http://www.etsjets.org/files/JETS-PDFs/53/53-4/JETS_53-4_787-800_Moorhead.pdf.

[19] The Jewish Era, October 1893. http://books.google.com/books?id=hLw6AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA255&lpg=PA255&dq=J.+I.+Fles+zeeland&source=bl&ots=QPOR9Jiii-&sig=Jbdj2ZlHxnjUjhQtYs7VpJwJAnk&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Upr7Uu-VGui82gWF3ICAAg&ved=0CCwQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=J.%20I.%20Fles%20zeeland&f=false their p. 247 & p. 233. Their witnessing occurred during the Chicago World's Fair.

[20] http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod/1896acts_et.pdf p. 5, 6, and p. 48 of the pdf.

[21] Scott Hoezee and Chris Meehan, Flourishing in the Land: A Hundred-Year History of Christian Reformed Missions in North America. Publisher: Christian Reformed Home Missions, 1996. p. 48 - 51.

[22] Yaakov Ariel. Evangelizing the Chosen People: Missions to the Jews in America, 1880-2000. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. p. 25. https://books.google.com/books?id=r3hCgIZB790C&pg=PA25&lpg=PA25&dq=%E2%80%9Cthe+present+era+was+ending+and+the+Messianic+age+was+at+hand.%E2%80%9D&source=bl&ots=JxS0PO0f73&sig=A2DadW6L5YqTjbGj3zhsD-hrWNQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=-eyaVJOGFImWNqyUgagD&ved=0CBQQ6AEwAA.

[23] op. cit. Henry Beets. The Christian Reformed Church in North America … (history in English). p.119 . And 120.

[24] op. cit. The link is in end note 13.

[25] The Origins of Pella II by Rev. Wm. Zeilstra.
http://pella2crc.org//wp-content/uploads/2013/09/originsofpella2-2005.pdf.

[26] Calvin's Heritage Hall minister files; article collection. Jacob Van Der Zee's "The Hollanders of Iowa", 1912 said, "The Hollanders have subscribed $3000 for a school at Pella." So Fles was advocating for a local parochial school.

[27] 1912 Acts of Synod. http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod/1912acts_et.pdf. "Attempt to take over" on p. 13. Fles asked, "Why" on p. 84. The Report of the Committee with Reference to Jewish Missions on p. 92 – 97 with "the big question" on p. 94. Rev. Meyer spoke on behalf of the Chicago Hebrew Mission on p. 36.

[28] 1914 Acts of Synod. http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod/1914acts_et.pdf. p. 20. p. 104 & 105 said Isaac Fles audited the "Heathen Mission." p. 108 has "work of love." p. 109 has "joy and zeal."

[29] David Rausch. *Protofundamentalism's Attitudes Toward Zionism*, 1878-1918.
http://books.google.com/books?id=cyLKAgAAQBAJ&pg=PA139&dq=%22the+beginnings+of+fulfillment%22&hl=en&sa=X&ei=KmmvU_XrEsyOqAbiioKoAw&ved=0CDYQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22the%20beginnings%20of%20fulfillment%22&f=false. p. 15 (139).

[30] Harry Bultema. Valiant and Diligent for Truth: An Autobiography. Publisher: Grace Publications Inc. (1987). p. 77 and p. 86. Rev. was wrongly called I. Fles (or Jacob) in some other sources.

[31] ibid. Harry Bultema. p. 77 and p. 86. Rev. was called I. Fles.

[32] Acts of Synod 1918, 78.

33 Valiant and diligent for truth: An autobiography. By Harry Bultema. p. 107.

[34] For more information see: Thomas David Boslooper, "Grace and Glory Days" Origins (1991) v 9, #1, 24-30.

35 Origins magazine. By Herbert J. Brinks. http://www.calvin.edu/hh/origins/Fall88.pdf. p. 14 - 15.
His sons also stayed; Isaac was at First C.R.C. in 1917, and Benjamin at English speaking Bethany C.R.C. in Muskegon in '20. Source: Yearbook of the Christian Reformed Church in America. ... 1920.
http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015071425287;view=1up;seq=146. p. 146.
http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015071425261;view=1up;seq=133. p. 128.

[36] Acts of Synod. http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod/1918acts_et.pdf. Their p. 23-24 is p. 21-22 of the pdf document. Page 114 starts Rev. Fles's "the following reasons not to do this".

[37] Acts of Synod. http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod/1920acts_et.pdf. p. 124 and 128.

[38] Many think the next verses 20 - 21 and the beginning of the next chapter of Isaiah 27 show that this passage is a premillennial prophecy. http://www.biblestudytools.com/isaiah/passage.aspx?q=isaiah+26:19-21.

[39] Gordon Spykman, "Fundamentalism in the CRC: A Critique Fundamentalism in the CRC," Pro Rege, (September 1986) 14. http://www.dordt.edu/publications/pro_rege/crcpi/64058.pdf.
James D. Bratt, Dutch Calvinism in Modern America: A History of a Conservative Subculture, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984. p. 98.